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Brazil Public Opinion Monitor: Baseline Survey Results

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BRAZIL PUBLIC OPINION MONITOR: BASELINE SURVEY RESULTS

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1 Scope and aims of the Brazil Public Opinion Monitor

The Brazil Public Opinion Monitor (BPOM) is a longitudinal panel of 2,672 opinion leaders from across Brazil that aims to provide an on-going monitor of opinions and perspectives on the economic and social development of Brazil, and on Brazil's place in the wider world. A particular sub-theme is Brazil's relations with other emerging and developing economies in South America and globally.

Reflecting the logistical difficulties and costs associated with surveys involving a representative sample of the Brazilian population, the BPOM specifically focuses on opinion leaders. Here, opinion leaders are defined as individuals who are engaged actively in economic and/or political issues in Brazil and are willing to participate in an on-going panel which means that they will be asked to respond to questions on an on-going basis. A further rationale for the focus on opinion leaders is that they both provide an effective 'pulse' on opinions on economic and social issues in Brazil, and are also key drivers of these opinions.

The BPOM is an internet-based survey platform through which members are presented with short questionnaires every two months. Members are sent an email inviting them to participate in each survey which contains a link to the survey. After a period of seven days, members who have not responded are sent a reminder.

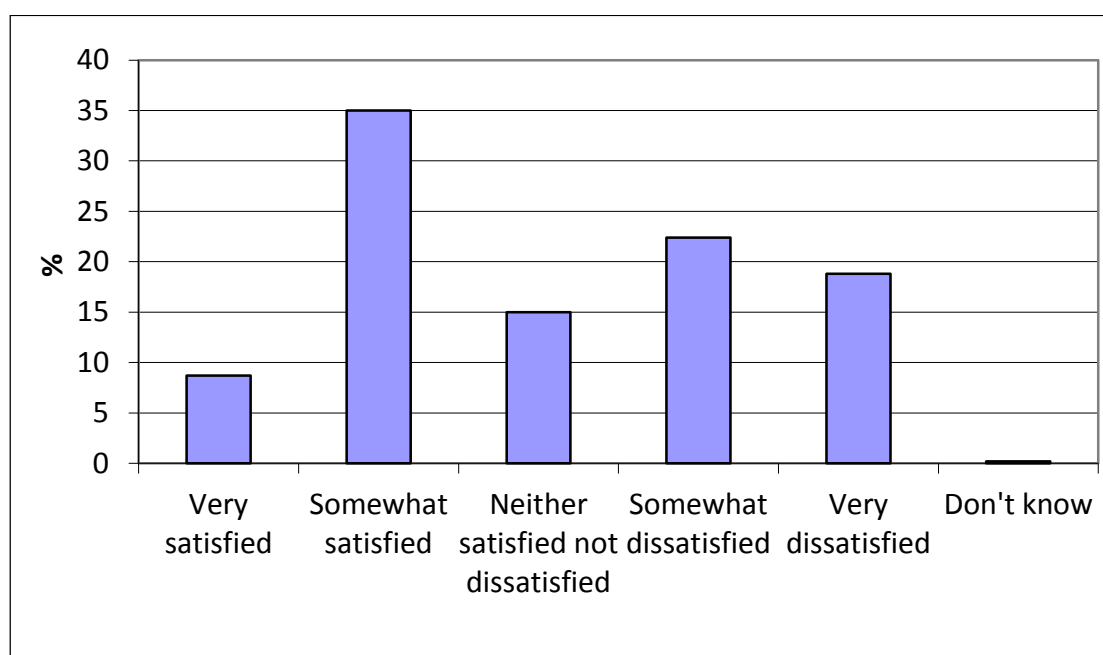
The current survey was undertaken over the period August to September 2013. Of the 2,672 members of the panel, 2,189 returned the fully-completed questionnaire. A summary of the results is provided below.

These results, and those of the surveys through the remainder of 2013, aim to provide a baseline of opinions and perspectives on the economic and social development of Brazil, and on Brazil's place in the wider world. Surveys in future months and years will enable changes in opinions relative to this baseline to be tracked. More importantly, the longitudinal nature of the panel makes it possible to identify who has changed their opinions and to pinpoint the key factors driving such changes.

2 Broad sentiment on life in Brazil today and into the future

To assess the broad sentiment of panel members they were asked how satisfied they were with life in Brazil today. The results suggest a profound split in views, with 43 per cent indicating that they were satisfied with life in Brazil, and 41 per cent that they were dissatisfied (Figure 1). The fact that 19 per cent were 'very dissatisfied' with life in Brazil whilst only nine per cent were 'very satisfied', however, suggests panel members as a whole were marginally skewed towards being dissatisfied.

Figure 1 Overall, how satisfied are you with life in Brazil today?



Looking to the future, however, the results suggest a strong feeling of optimism amongst opinion leaders in Brazil. Thus, 45 per cent were of the view that life for people like themselves would get better over the next five to ten years, with a further 11 per cent believing life would get 'much better' (Figure 2). Conversely, only 14 per cent thought that life for people like themselves would get worse.

Panel members were also somewhat optimistic about the life of poor people in Brazil, with 47 per cent of the view that their life would get better over the next five to ten years (Figure 3). Only 17 per cent were of the view that the life of poor people would get worse over the next five to ten years, whilst 29 per cent thought their life would not appreciably change.

Figure 2 Over the next five to ten years, how do you see life changing for people like you in Brazil?

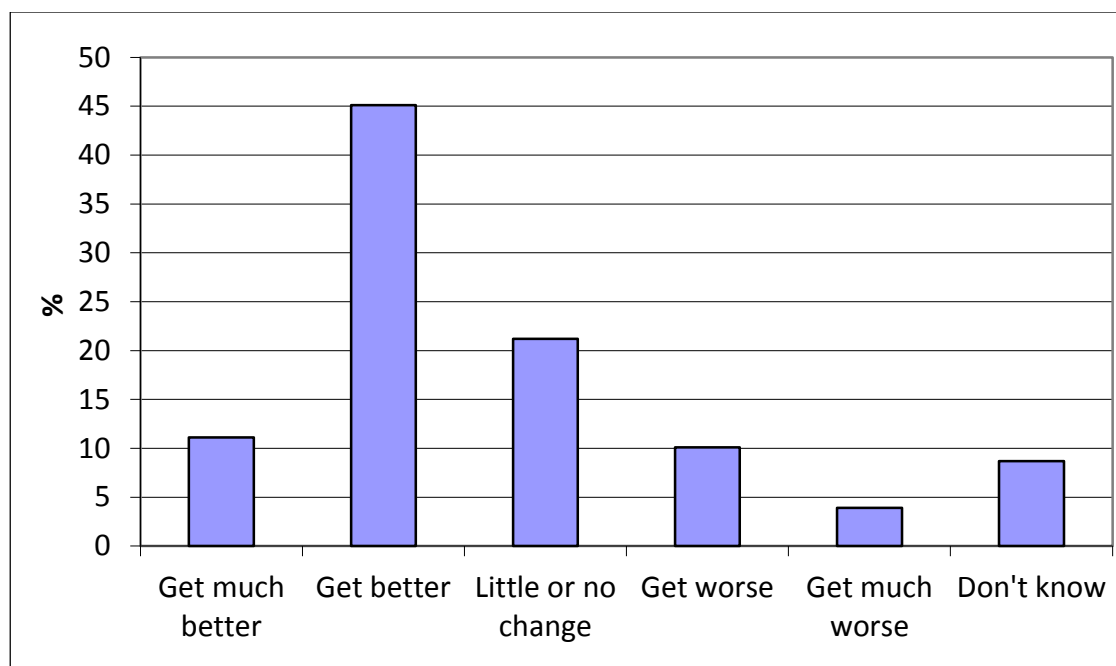
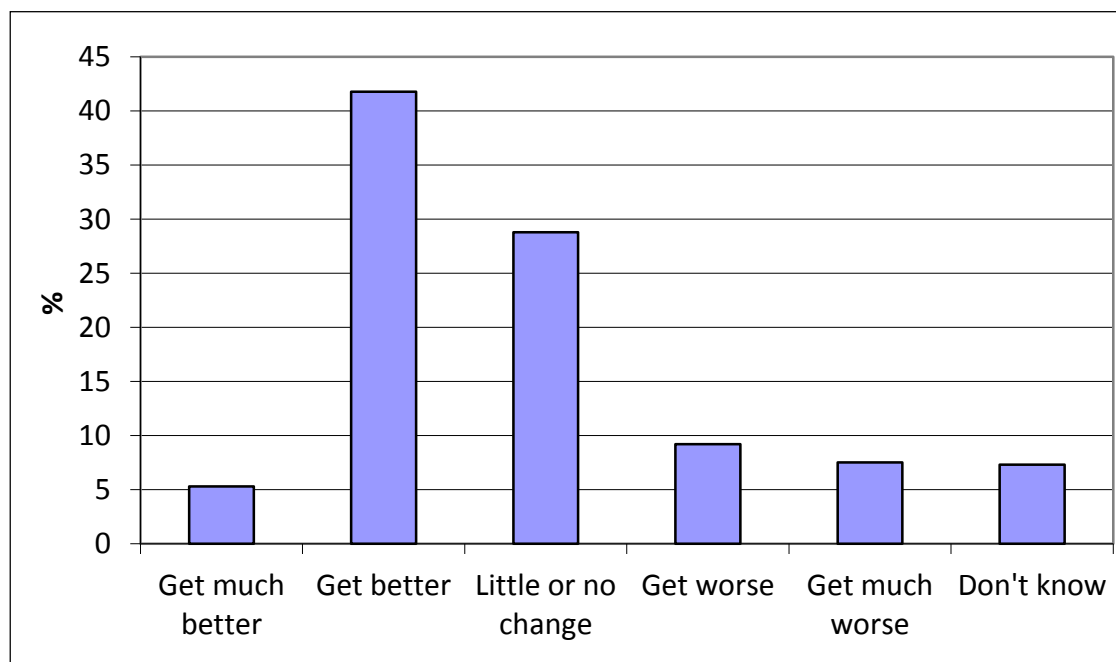


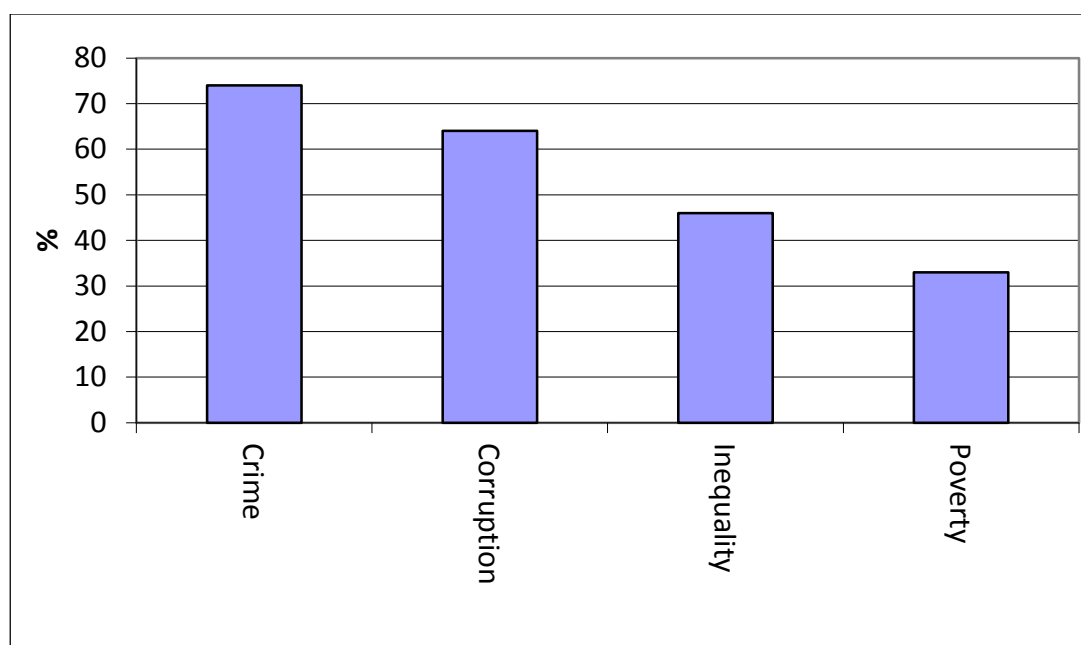
Figure 3 Over the next five to ten years, how do you see life changing for poor people in Brazil?



3 Major challenges facing Brazil today

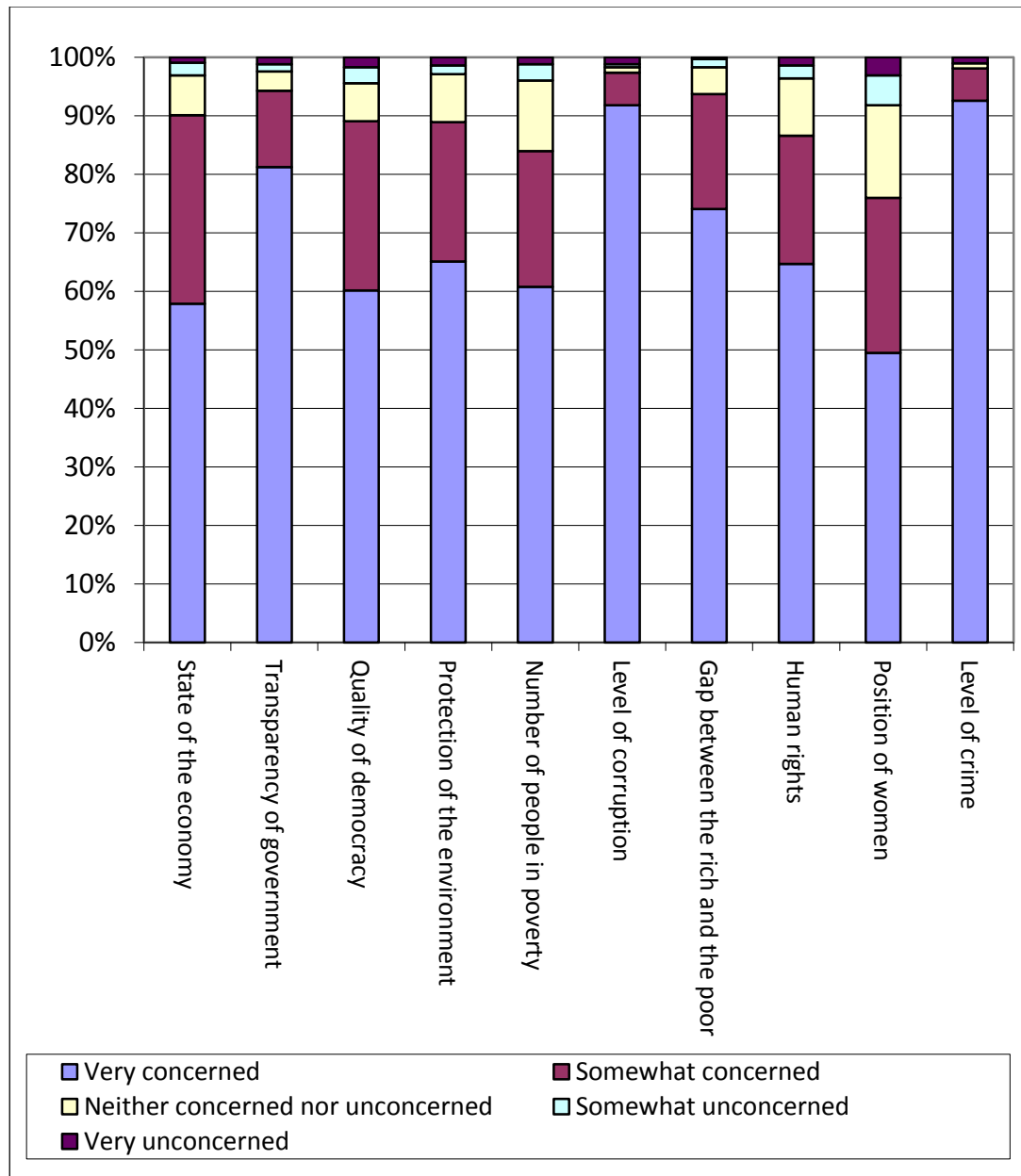
Panel members were asked to identify the number one issue or challenge facing Brazil today. By not providing any prompts, the aim was to identify the ‘top of mind’ issues of opinion leaders, which can be taken as their most prominent concerns. By far, the issues mentioned most frequently were crime and corruption, being mentioned by 74 per cent and 64 per cent of respondents, respectively. Other prominent concerns related to inequality (mentioned by 46 per cent) and poverty (mentioned by 33 per cent).

Figure 4 What do you see as the number one challenge facing Brazil today?



To provide a broader assessment of the challenges facing Brazil today, some of which might not come immediately to mind, respondents were presented with a list of issues and asked to indicate how concerned they were about each issue. Mirroring the results in Figure 4, the level of crime and the level of corruption were of greatest concern to members of the panel (Figure 5), with 93 per cent and 92 per cent indicating they were ‘very concerned’ respectively. Transparency of government and the gap between the rich and the poor also had very high levels of concern. Of least concern was the position of women and the state of the economy.

Figure 5 Overall, how concerned are you about the following issues in Brazil today?



4 Brazil and the wider world

The baseline survey aimed to get an initial indication of how opinion leaders considered Brazil was seen globally. Whilst 43 per cent were of the view that Brazil was seen positively by the rest of the world, 35 per cent were of the diametrically opposed view and considered Brazil to be viewed negatively (Figure 6). It is noteworthy, however, that relatively few respondents provided extreme responses; thus, only six per cent indicated that Brazil was viewed 'very positively' by the rest of the world and only nine per cent that it was viewed 'very negatively'.

Figure 6 Overall, how do you think the rest of the world sees Brazil?

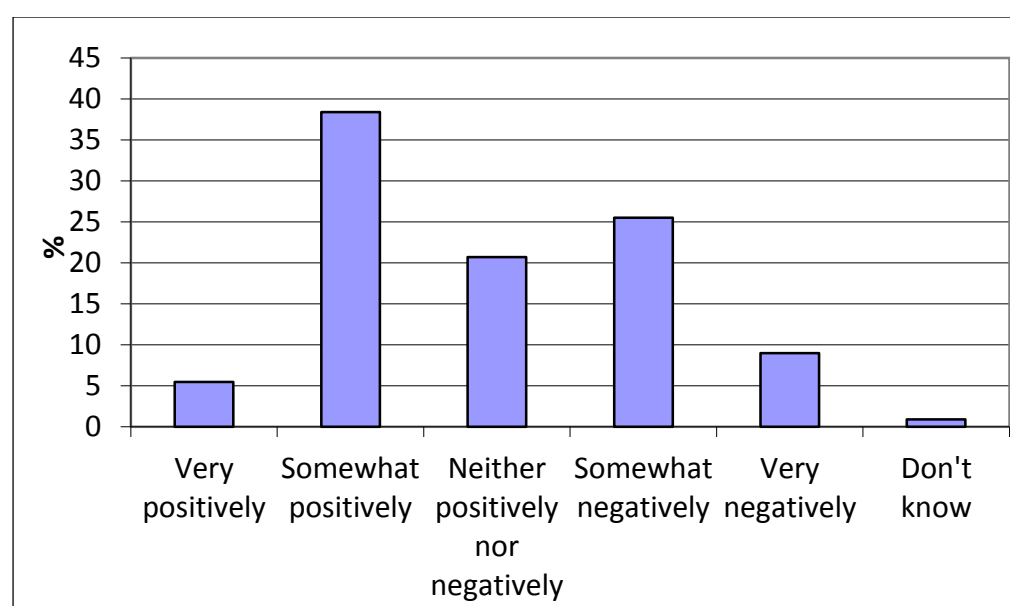
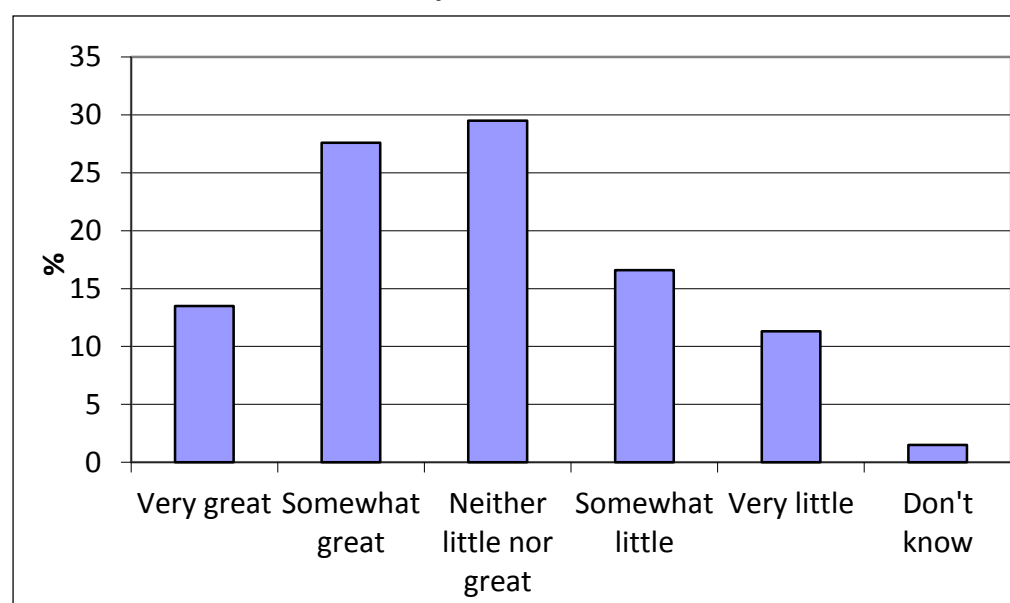
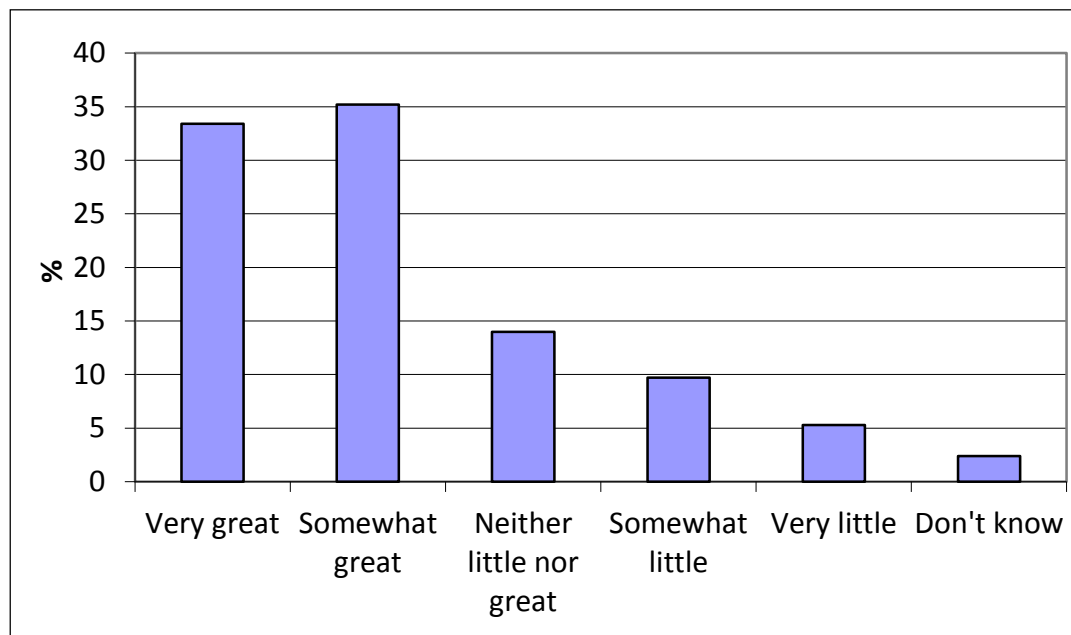


Figure 7 How much political influence do you think Brazil has in the world today?



When it came to Brazil's political influence in the world, 41 per cent of opinion leaders on the panel were of the view that Brazil had a great influence (Figure 7). Only 28 per cent considered Brazil to have little influence in the world. Brazil was thought to have far greater influence within South America, with 35 per cent considering its influence to be 'somewhat great' and 33 per cent of the view that it was 'very great'. When asked whether Brazil had the capacity to take on more political influence in the world, only 36 per cent responded positively whilst 57 per cent were of the view that it lacked the capacity.

Figure 8 How much political influence do you think Brazil has in South America today?



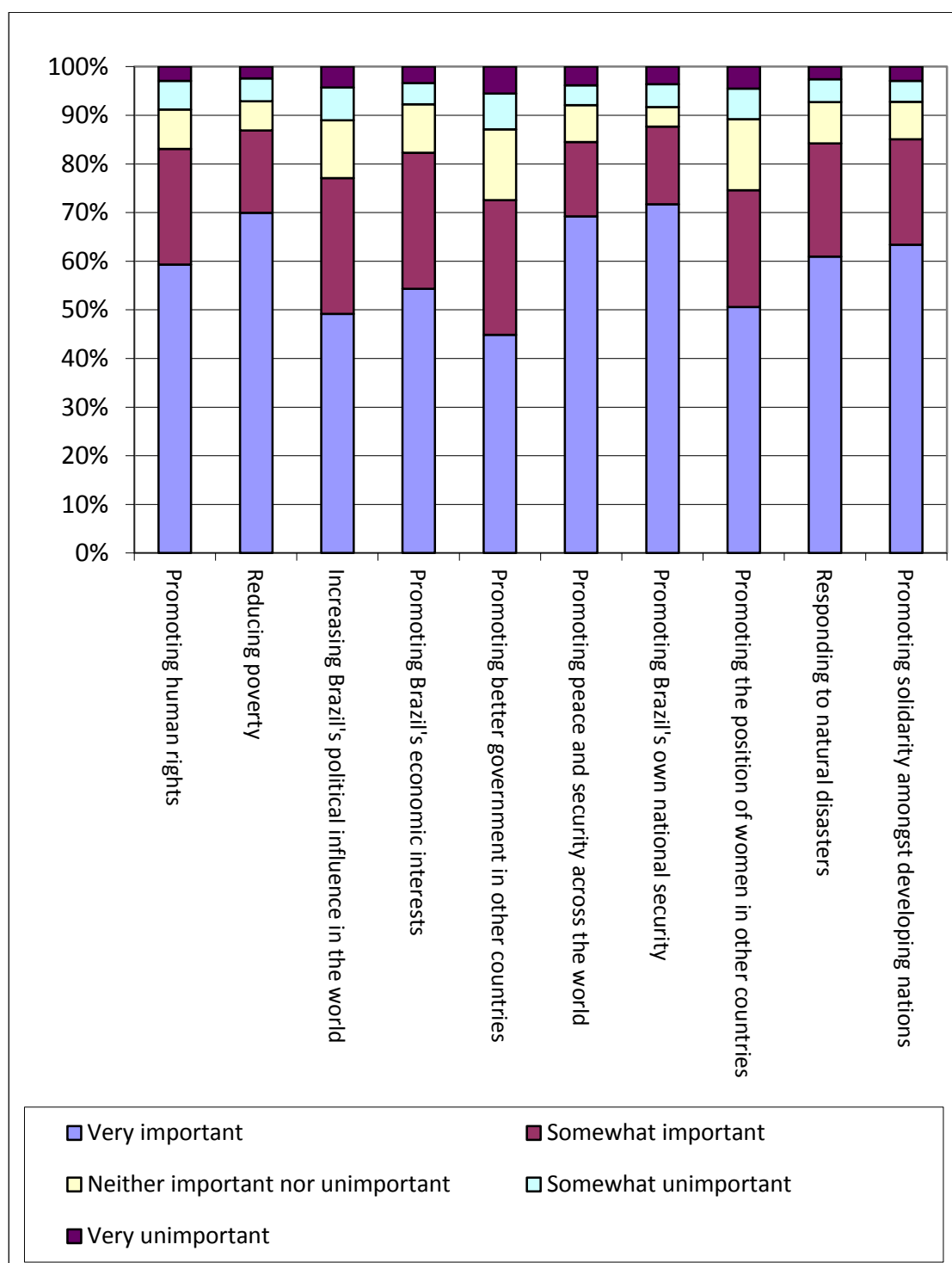
5 Brazil and aid

Finally, panel members were asked about financial and other forms of aid, both received by Brazil from other countries and that provided by Brazil to other developing countries.

Of respondents to the survey, 37 per cent believed that Brazil receives financial and other forms of assistance from other countries, whilst 56 per cent were of the view that Brazil did not receive aid. Of those believing that Brazil does receive aid, 43 per cent indicated that aid was provided by the EU and 32 per cent by the US. A significant minority of respondents were also of the view that aid was provided by the UK (13 per cent) and Japan (9 per cent).

Interestingly, 63 per cent of respondents were of the view that Brazil should receive financial and other forms of assistance, with only 30 per cent not considering aid appropriate.

Figure 9 How important should each of the following factors be in determining the financial and other assistance provided by Brazil to other developing countries?



Turning to the role of Brazil as a provider of financial and other forms of assistance to other developing countries, 61 per cent were of the view that Brazil provides such aid, with only 13 per cent considering this not to be the case. It is noteworthy, however, that 26 per cent of panel members did not know.

Views were split, however, on whether Brazil should provide financial and other forms of assistance to other developing countries, with 51 per cent for and 40 per cent against. When asked which factors should drive the financial and other forms of assistance Brazil might provide to other developing countries, those considered most important was the promotion of Brazil's own national security and promoting peace and security in the world (Figure 9). Panel members were also of the view that promoting solidarity amongst developing nations and responding to national disasters to be important factors driving aid provided by Brazil to other developing countries.

Further information

If you would like any further information about the BPOM and/or additional results, please do not hesitate to contact Spencer Henson (s.henson@ids.ac.uk). In addition, information about the BPOM and similar panels in India and South Africa is available at www.ids.ac.uk/ipom.



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